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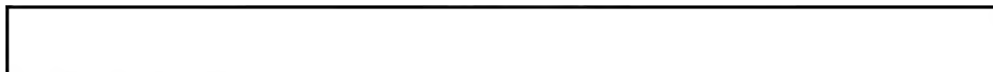
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Independence Efforts Slowing in the Azores
and the Madeiras

Independence movements remain active in both the Azores and the Madeiras, but the replacement of the pro-Communist Goncalves regime in Lisbon has sapped much of their momentum.

The Azores Liberation Front is circulating a new program that calls for negotiations with Lisbon and a referendum on independence. Should negotiations fail, however, the Front advocates a unilateral declaration of independence.

The new program represents the views of the largest faction of the Front which is dominated by the center-left Popular Democrats. It includes provisions for land reform, the dissolution of monopolies, free trade unions, and equality among all of the islands of the archipelago.

The progressive features of the program may improve the image of the Front, which has been closely identified with the Azorean upper classes. At the same time, however, it could cost the Front the financial support of some of the large land-owners and wealthy Azorean emigres in the US who first organized the movement.

Even the new program, however, may not be sufficient to attract many new adherents to the independence movement. Having gained some concessions from Lisbon, Azoreans now appear to be turning their attention to more traditional partisan political activity. Public debate among political parties has increased and the press has given broad coverage to a dispute between the three principal parties over proposals for autonomy, including the suggested "regionalization" of banks and insurance companies.

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Independence sentiment in the Madeiras has been exaggerated by the mainland press; most islanders seem to prefer autonomy. At present, it appears that Madeirans would move for independence only in the case of a resurgence of Communist influence in Portugal or the denial of a satisfactory arrangement for autonomy. Reportedly, there are as many as four independence groups in the Madeiras, none of which is effectively organized. The most widely known group, the Front for the Liberation of the Madeiran Archipelago, was formed early last summer by conservative businessmen and land-owners worried about the leftward trend of mainland politics and the damaging impact of the sagging Portuguese economy on the Madeiras.

The separatist movement in the Madeira Islands began much like the Azorean front, which was used as a model. In contrast to their Azorean counterparts, however, the Madeiran separatists have been unable to stimulate much interest, especially among the working class, which makes up about four-fifths of the population.

The bombing incidents on the islands over the past few weeks provoked much greater concern on the mainland than they did among Madeirans. Lisbon's concern and the heavy coverage in the mainland press, however, has aided the constituent assembly delegates from Madeira in their move for greater autonomy.

If the Portuguese government continues to be receptive to the demand of the Azoreans and Madeirans for greater autonomy, the independence movements will find it difficult to find new recruits. If Lisbon returns to its old policy of neglect, however, or should the present government crumble in the face of leftist opposition, the separatists could quickly become a serious threat.

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Portuguese Troops Resist Discipline

Portuguese Prime Minister Azevedo has stepped up his campaign to restore military discipline, but he continues to face outright defiance from leftist units.

Government efforts to transfer disruptive soldiers as a short term solution to growing indiscipline are being hotly contested. Radicals have banded together in organizations such as "Soldiers United Will Win" and "Revolutionary Action of Army Enlisted Men," and have allied themselves with extreme leftwing parties. They probably are receiving veiled support from the Communists, who officially continue to support the Azevedo government.

Last weekend, an army transportation training unit in Porto was disbanded after enlisted men voted to resist the transfer of two leftist officers and several enlisted men. Some of the soldiers issued a statement warning that "the struggle has not ended." They were immediately supported by a coalition of six far-leftist parties which called for "mass action" to protest the unit's dissolution.

Pro-Communist demonstrations in Porto were broken up by troops late Saturday night and early Sunday morning. Other demonstrations were reported in southern Portugal and near Lisbon. "Soldiers United Will Win" has called for a demonstration this evening in Porto.

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Radicals have succeeded in preventing the transfer of more than 40 soldiers, accused of participating in anti-government demonstrations, from Beja air base in southern Portugal. The government sent loyal paratroops to break up a demonstration of several hundred leftists outside the base, but the transfer orders were later rescinded. The soldiers will also be allowed to participate in non-partisan political demonstrations.

In the Lisbon area, leftist units are continuing their campaign to cast doubt on Socialist Party claims that a leftist coup was planned for last week. The internal security command, headed by General Carvalho publicly denied Socialist allegations that some units in the command were involved in plotting against the government. One of the units accused issued a statement charging the Socialists with wanting to install a rightwing dictatorship.

In a press interview, Prime Minister Azevedo sided with the Socialists and blamed the far left for the breakdown in military discipline which prevents the government from exercising complete control over the Lisbon area. His assertion was borne out by the reported refusal of radical soldiers at the main arsenal to comply with Azevedo's order to supply more automatic rifles to a dependable regiment. The radical soldiers have helped the far left smuggle arms from the arsenal to sympathetic cadres.

Azevedo's decisiveness in combatting rebellious troops may be undermined by the return yesterday of President Costa Gomes from official visits to Poland and the USSR. Costa Gomes is noted for his willingness to compromise and has weakened anti-Communist forces in the past by trying to avoid a confrontation at all costs. He may see Azevedo's actions as dangerous and seek to curb his authority.

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During a speech yesterday marking the founding of the first Portuguese republic in 1910, Costa Gomes emphasized the need to heal divisions among the people and the armed forces, but also deplored actions that "prejudice the exercise of authority." Following the ceremony, Socialist leader Soares was attacked by a crowd of radical leftists and had to be rescued by armed naval police. [REDACTED]

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Austria: "Kreisky - Sonst Wer!"

The absolute majority won by the Socialists in Sunday's election was aptly forecast in their campaign slogan, "Kreisky - Who Else!" The Socialists polled just over 50 percent and won 94 seats--gaining one--in the 183-seat Austrian lower house. The main challenger, the Austrian People's Party, won 78 seats--down two--while the small Liberal Party gained one seat for a total of 11.

Absentee ballots have yet to be counted, but could only affect the overall result by one seat and would not deny the Socialists their majority. Chancellor Kreisky has said that he will not form a coalition with either of the opposition parties given his stunning victory. Furthermore, the 64-year-old Chancellor said he will not change the composition of his current government before next year, and will continue present policies.

The election constitutes a major psychological defeat for the opposition parties as both had hoped to gain significantly at the Socialists' expense. The electorate, however, clearly retains confidence in Kreisky's moderate policies as the best guarantee of political stability and economic well-being.

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